Shortage of kerosene in Jharkhand

830. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATU RAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is tremendous shortage of kerosene in the State of Jharkhand;

(b) whether Government are also aware that most of the tribals in Jharkhand do not have access to electricity and hence are dependent upon kerosene for lighting the house; and

(c) by when Government will ensure continuous supply of kerosene to all the households of Jharkhand, particularly to the tribals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) PDS kerosene is an allocated product. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas makes quarterly allocation of PDS kerosene to States/Union Territories for further distribution under the Public Distribution System (PDS) network. The quantity of PDS SKO for distribution per card holder is decided by concerned State Government/UT and the same varies from State to State.

As per provisional figures a available on upliftment of PDS Kerosene in the State of Jharkhand during April to December, 2006, the State Government has uplifted 1,57,725 Metric Tonnes (MTs) of PDS SKO as against allocation of 1,58,381 MTs. There is no shortage of kerosene reported in the State of Jharkhand.

(c) With a view to distribute the subsidized PDS kerosene to the targeted beneficiaries, the Government has taken the following steps:

(i) In order to check the black marketing of Public Distribution System (PDS) kerosene, the Central Government have made provisions in the kerosene (Restriction on Use and Fixation of Ceiling Price) Order, 1993, issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, that dealers cannot sell PDS kerosene at a price higher than the price fixed by the Government or OMCs and that the PDS kerosene dealers should prominently display stock-cum-price board at the place of business including the place of store at a conspicuous place.

(ii) Government have approved a pilot project for radically revamping the PDS kerosene distribution network with the primary objective

of ensuring that this heavily subsidized product is actually made available in the required quantities at subsidized price to the intended beneficiaries; and secondly, to thus cap, reverse and eventually eliminate the diversion of PDS kerosene for adulteration. One of the salient features of this scheme is that supplies to the sub-wholesale points will the made under the direct supervision and responsibility of the public sector OMCs. The scheme has been launched on a pilot basis in 414 blocks including 10 blocks in Jharkhand in the country from 2nd October, 2005. The pilot scheme has been further extended upto 30.6.2007.

(iii) With a view to checking diversion of subsidized kerosene and in order to monitor the movement of Tank Trucks transporting petroleum products, the Government have advised the public sector OMCs for installing Global Positioning System (GPS) based vehicle tracking system on all the tank trucks by 31.03.2007. The essential features of the system is that the vehicle carrying PDS SKO is fitted with a device and can be tracked on real time basis from the time it leaves the supply location and till it reaches the destination.

(iv) To check adulteration in auto fuels, and also to check diversion of subsidized kerosene. Public sector OMCs have commenced introduction of marker in kerosene on all India basis with effect from 1.10.2006. Under the new system, Market is being put in kerosene in all depots. This system heralds the introduction of world-class technology to curb and eventually eliminate the menace of adulteration of transportation fuels along the supply chain. Oil marketing Companies in the Private sector have also been simultaneously asked to introduce marker in kerosene as is being done by Public Sector OMCs.

Shortage of LPG

831. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country has been experiencing acute shortage of LPG supplies across the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;